THE

EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.

(NEW SERIES.)

VOL. III. FEBRUARY, 1809. No. II.

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIRS OF THE REV. PHILIP HENRY, A. M. OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, BORN AT WHITEHALL, WESTMINSTER, AUG. 24, 1631.

His father, Mr. John Henry, was gentleman to the earl of Pembroke, who being made lord chamberlain, preferred him to the king's service: and he lived and died a courtier. This son, being born in the court, Philip earl of Pembroke, James earl of Carlisle, and the countess of Salisbury were his sponsors in baptism. Prince Charles and the duke of York being about his age, he in his childhood often attended upon them in their play, and might have expected future preferment. But the public changes that ensued separated him from court, and he was well satisfied in his removal, not daring to think of a return, for fear of being insnared; otherwise he wanted not encouragement. However, the tincture of his first education so far continued, as to leave the most sweet and obliging air of courtesy in his conversation, which made him universally beloved. He was brought up at Westminster school under Dr. Busby, and being a great proficient, was particularly caressed by him. In 1645 he was admitted king's scholar, and was first of the election, partly by his own merit and partly by the interest of the earl of Pembroke. While he was at school, he constantly attended on the morning lecture in the abbey church, carried on by seven members of the assembly, as also upon the monthly fasts at St. Margaret's, and found such good effects from

it, that he often recommended it to parents to bring their children betimes to public ordinances. He was one of the scholars whom Dr. Busby employed in reading Greek authors, to collect materials for his excellent Greek grammar. The doctor's care to assist him in his preparation for the Lord's supper, (which, according to the custom of the school, he received before he went to the university) was very beneficial to him, and he often thankfully acknowledged it. May, 1647, he was chosen from school to Christ Church, Oxon. jure loci, with four others, of whom he had the second place. In December following he was entered commoner, Mr. Underwood being his tutor. His godfather, the earl of Pembroke, gave him 10*l.* to set out with. He applied himself vigorously to his studies, and in the March following was admitted student of the house by Dr. Hammond, then subdean. Upon the visitation of the university by order of parliament, when this question was put to all, to be answered in writing, "Will you submit to the power of the parliament in this present visitation?" Mr. Henry's answer was, "I submit as far as I may with a safe conscience, and without perjury," having taken the oath of allegiance and supremacy. His answer was allowed, and he was continued in his student's place. He made good improvement in his studies, took his degrees at the usual time, and gained great applause by several college exercises.

He preached his first sermon at South Hinesey, Oxfordshire, in January, 1653. Serjeant Puleston's lady, of Emerald in Worthenbury, writing to Mr. F. Palmer of Christ Church, to recommend to her a young man to take the care of her sons, and preach at Worthenbury, he proposed it to Mr. Henry; who was willing to make a trial for half a year, and went in September 1653. When the time was expired, he returned to Oxford; but afterwards, upon the earnest invitation of judge Puleston, and all the people of the parish, he fixed among them. For two or three years he kept his place in Christ Church, attending once a year, and disposed of most of his income among poor scholars. The judge settled 100*l.* *per annum* upon him (in lieu of the tythe) free of all incumbrances. He was ordained at Prees, September 16, 1657. Being thus fixed, he was abundant in his labours to win souls. Besides preaching he expounded the scriptures, catechized, and explained the catechism. He set up a monthly lecture, and had also a monthly conference. He was very industrious in visiting the

sick, instructing and praying with them. He preached at the funerals of all whom he buried, thinking it a peculiar opportunity of doing good. He was very careful in admission to the Lord's supper, that the weak might not be discouraged, nor yet the ordinance profaned. His deportment towards his parishioners was very exemplary, condescending to the meanest, bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and "becoming all things to all men." For about eight years his ministry in this place was signally successful. He constantly laid by the tenth of his income for the poor, which he faithfully disposed of in the liberal things which he devised, especially the teaching of poor children. He had several offers of more considerable places, but was not given to change; and though the family of the Pulestons, after the death of the judge and his pious lady, grew very unkind to him, he resolved to see his call clear, before he would leave a place where God had owned and blessed him. When at the restoration, Dr. Bridgeman, the sequestered rector of Bangor, asserted his right to Worthenbury as a chapelry belonging to it, Mr. Henry was but as his curate; however, he continued about a year in the enjoyment of his liberty under him.

The grand question then on foot being about conformity; Mr. Henry used all means possible to satisfy himself, by reading and conversation; particularly at Oxford with Dr. Fell, afterwards bishop, but in vain. Being about that time at Chester, he discoursed with the dean and chancellor about the matter. The great argument they used to persuade him to conform was, that he would otherwise lose his preferment. "Besides (said they) you are a young man, and are you wiser than the king and the bishops?" Upon which he made this reflection in one of his papers: "God grant I may never be left to consult with flesh and blood in such matters!" He was repeatedly presented at Flint assizes for not reading the common prayer, before there was any obligation, and it was not without some difficulty that he got off. His annuity from the Emerald family was withheld; but what troubled him most was, that he was hindered from doing good in his former manner. At length Mr. Puleston and Dr. Bridgeman, having had a dispute about the tythe, came to an agreement, (by the mediation of sir T. Hanmer, September 11, 1661) of which this was the condition: that before the first of November following, he discharged Mr. Henry from the chapel of Worthenbury, without suffering

him to officiate there any more. Upon this Dr. Bridgeman discharged him by a writing under his hand, which was published in the church by one of Mr. Puleston's servants, October 27. Thus Mr. Henry ceased to preach to his people, but he ceased not to love and pray for them. He afterwards preached occasionally, in neighbouring places, till Bartholomew-day, 1662. "The day (says he) which our sins have made one of the saddest days to England, since the death of Edward VI. But even this is for good, though we know not how." The first time he visited Dr. Busby afterwards, the doctor asked him, "Prithee, child, what made THEE a nonconformist?" "Truly, sir (said he) YOU made me one, for you taught me those things that hindered me from conforming." He could not be satisfied to be reordained; nor could he assent and consent to all and every thing in a book, which he found liable to many just exceptions. But though he was a conscientious nonconformist, his moderation was remarkable. He wished for abp. Usher's Reduction of Episcopacy. Thinking it lawful to join in the common prayer, he practised accordingly, and endeavoured to satisfy others concerning it. He was much afraid of extremes, and more solicitous for nothing than to maintain christian charity among professors. At Michaelmas, 1662, he removed from Worthenbury to Broad Oak, where he had an estate which came to him by marriage, which not only supported him, but enabled him to relieve many who were in want. Here he constantly went with his family, on the Lord's day, to Whitewell chapel, or Tylstock church, preaching only occasionally. He used to say that he went to bear his testimony to public ordinances.

In October 1663, Mr. Steel and he were taken up and imprisoned, on pretence of a plot; upon which he wrote in one of his papers, "It is sweet being in any condition with a clear conscience." After some days, they were examined by the deputy lieutenants, charged with they knew not what, and dismissed upon their verbal security to be forthcoming upon twenty-four hours' notice. In 1665 they were made subcollectors of the royal aid. In September the same year, Mr. Henry was again taken prisoner to Hanmer; but after some days' confinement, he was discharged upon recognisance of 20*l.* with two sureties to be forthcoming upon notice. When the *Five-mile-act* took place, he left his family, but soon returned in peace. In 1667 he removed to Whitchurch, where he attended constantly on the public ministry, and in the

evening instructed his family, when some of his neighbours were admitted in. Here it was that he first administered the Lord's supper, after his ejectment. In February 1668, Mr. Lawrence and he being at Betley in Staffordshire, ventured one Lord's day, with the consent of all concerned, to preach in the parish church. This was soon reported in the house of commons, with these additions: that they tore the common prayerbook, trampled the surplice under their feet, pulled the minister of the place out of the pulpit, &c. These and other such like falsehoods produced an address from the house to the king to issue out a proclamation, for putting the law in execution against papists and nonconformists. In 1668 Mr. Henry returned with his family to Broad Oak, being desirous to be useful to those among whom God had given him an estate, and by whom he was generally loved and honoured. In the common concerns of the township and country he was a prudent counsellor; and in private differences, he was the common arbitrator of those parts, and a successful peacemaker. References were sometimes made to him by rule of court, at the assizes, with consent of parties. He was given to hospitality, and very compassionate towards poor strangers and travellers; and all that he had and did evidently prospered.

Upon the conventicle act, in 1670, he kept private, being loth to offend those in power. Obtaining a licence in 1672, he preached with open doors, *gratis*. He also held many lectures abroad in Shropshire, Cheshire, and Denbighshire, laying himself out for the good of souls, for several years. In 1681, he and Mr. Bury of Bolas keeping a day of fasting and prayer, at a private house, on occasion of extreme drought, were disturbed by the justices, who took the names of 150 persons. By the oath of two witnesses, they signed and sealed two records; by one of which they convicted the master of the house, and fined him 20*l*. and 5*l*. more as constable that year; and all the persons whose names they had taken 5*s*. each. By another they convicted Mr. Bury 20*l*. and Mr. Henry 40*l*. for which they distrained upon Mr. Henry, and carried away thirty-three loads of corn which lay cut upon the ground, hay, coals, &c. This he bore with his usual evenness of mind. In the same year there was a public conference between Dr. W. Lloyd, bishop of St. Asaph, and some nonconformist ministers. The bishop, on coming into those parts, set himself with vigour to reduce dissenters, and affected to do it by reasoning. He publicly

discoursed with the quakers at Llanvillin, and had often conversed privately with Mr. Owen of Oswestry. At length he appointed to meet him in the townhall, September 27, 1681, to show by what right he exercised the ministry, not having episcopal ordination. He desired him also to procure what other ministers he could to assist him, but gave him only four or five days' notice. The bishop brought with him the learned Mr. Henry Dodwell, and Mr. Owen was accompanied by Mr. Henry and Mr. Jonathan Roberts of Denbighshire. Mr. Henry pressed much for the management of the discourse in private before a select number, but could not prevail. However, his lordship promised, that nothing said by way of argument, should be any way turned to the prejudice of the disputants. There were present many of the clergy and gentry of the country, with the magistrates of the town, and a great multitude of people. The discourse began about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till between seven and eight at night. Much was said *pro* and *con.* about the identity of bishops and presbyters, the validity of presbyterian ordination, &c. but not under the strict laws of disputation. The bishop managed his part with great gravity and calmness, and Mr. Henry gained no small reputation. Even they who were adversaries to his cause, were brought by his meekness, humility, and truly christian spirit, apparent in the whole management, to entertain a better opinion of him and his way. The conference broke off abruptly. Mr. Roberts whispering to Mr. Henry, "Pray let my lord have the last word," a justice upon the bench overhearing him, replied, "You say my lord shall have the last word, but he shall not; I will. We, thank God, we have the sword of power in our hands, and by the grace of God we'll keep it, and it shall not rust; and I hope every lawful magistrate will do as I do; and look to yourselves, gentlemen, by the grace of God I'll root you out of the country." To which a forward man in the crowd said, "Amen, throw them down stairs." But the mayor of the town gave order for their safety. The bishop afterwards often corresponded with Mr. Henry by letter, and conversed with him when he came into those parts, with great openness and freedom, telling him that he did not look upon him as σχισματικος, [a schismatic] but only as παρασυνάγωγος, [a separatist] and said, that if he were in his diocese, he did not question but he should find out some way to make him useful.

In 1612 Mr. Henry kept an open meeting, by the magistrates' connivance. In 1683 and 1684 he preached privately at home without disturbance. But in 1686, at the time of *Monmouth's* rebellion, he was made a prisoner in Chester castle, without the shadow of criminality. With joy he accepted king James's indulgence in 1687, though being sensible of its design, he could not but rejoice with trembling. When the king came into that country, to court the compliments of the people, he joined with several others in an address, the purport of which was only to thank him for the liberty given them, with a promise to demean themselves quietly in the use of it. When the commissioners came down to inquire what injury the dissenters had sustained by the penal laws, and how the money levied upon them was disposed of, Mr. Henry being sent to, answered, "That he had long since forgiven all the agents, instruments, and occasions of his troubles, and had purposed never to say any thing more about them." In May, 1688, he was nominated a justice of peace for the county; but he refused to act, and vigorously applied himself to his ministerial work, in which he persisted to the last. He died in peace [though in dreadful agonies from the stone] June 24, 1696, aged 66, [When his son came in, who had been sent for from Chester, he said to him, "O son, you are welcome to a dying father! I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." His pain was very acute, but he had peace within. "I am tormented (said he) but blessed be God, not *in this flame*." When he found himself ready to depart, he said, "O death, where is thy" —— when his speech faltered, and he quietly breathed out his soul into the hands of his Redeemer. Mr. Talents of Salop preached his funeral sermon on Rom. viii. 23.

Through his excess of modesty he would publish nothing. But some Latin verses of his were among the poems which the university of Oxford printed upon the peace with Holland in 1654, which show him to have been no less a poet than an orator.] Wood says not a word about him, though he was a noted Oxonian. [Few readers need be informed that Mr. Matthew Henry was his son, and that he wrote his father's life, from which the foregoing account is extracted. The editor could with pleasure enlarge, much to the reader's edification; but our limits will not admit. This is the less to be regretted, as that excellent life may easily be procured, Mr. Job Orton having republished it. It will

be acceptable to most readers to close this article with a few extracts from Mr. Henry's Diary, which have never before been printed.

A solemn covenant with God. (No date.)

" Forasmuch as I have, by often experience, found the treachery and deceitfulness of my own heart, and being taught that it is my duty to engage my heart to approach unto God, and that one way of doing it is by subscribing with my hand unto the Lord," therefore let this paper be a witness, that I do deliberately, of choice and unreservedly, take God in Christ to be mine, and give myself to him to be his, to love him, to fear him, to serve and obey him; and renouncing all my sins, with hearty sorrow and detestation, I do cast myself only upon free grace, through the merits of Christ, for pardon and forgiveness; and do propose, God enabling me, from this day forward more than ever, to exercise myself unto godliness, and to walk in all the ways of religion, as much as ever I can, with delight and cheerfulness, as knowing that my labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

February 1657. " These following sins were in this month set home with power upon my conscience. (1) Omissions innumerable. I fall short of my duty in every relation. (2) Much forwardness upon every occasion, which fills my ways with thorns and snares. (3) Pride; a vein of it runs through all my conversation. (4) Selfseeking. Corrupt ends in all I do. Applause of men oftentimes regarded more than the glory of God. (5) My own iniquity. Many bubblings up of heart-corruption, and breakings forth too. O Lord shame hath covered my face! Pardon and purge for Jesus's sake!"

The following is a specimen of the addition that might be made to the collection of his sayings in his life, Chap. x. " Guilt in the soul is like a mote in the eye; not at ease till wept out. Let him be afraid to die that is afraid to go to heaven. It were a good thought in a doubtful matter, What would Jesus Christ do if he were here? The evil of an affliction is the wrath of God in it. (To encourage faith under afflictions;) The pilot is wise, though the sea is rough."

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL ESSAYS.

EVIDENCES OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, BOTH NEGATIVELY AND POSITIVELY CONSIDERED.

"Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith." PAUL.

FIRST, *negatively*. As it would be unwarrantable to affirm, that a full persuasion of interest in Christ, enters into the essence of true faith; so we should be equally far from concluding, that a *simple desire* to believe is an evidence of believing: or, to use a phrase which, in the account of some, is little short of a theological axiom, That a *desire* of grace, *is* grace. For a well grounded persuasion of interest in Christ is to be considered rather as a happy effect of believing on the Son of God, than as *faith itself*. Because the gospel does not exhibit Jesus to an awakened sinner, under the notion of his having died *for him*, in particular; or so as to warrant an immediate conclusion, that Christ and all the blessings of grace are his: but under the consideration of his being a guilty, condemned, perishing creature; that the Lord Redeemer is mighty to save, and the only object of hope for the guilty; that the chief of sinners, the most detestable of human characters, are welcome to him! The first question that should engage the awakened sinner's attention, is not, *Did Christ die for me, in particular?* But, *Is he able to save?* And, *are the chief of sinners (sinners in similar circumstances with myself) encouraged by the gospel to put their trust in him?* For, to rely on the Lord Redeemer, as able to save the very worst of sinners, as *perfectly suitable* to relieve the most pressing wants, and as free for the *vilest* of our apostate race, is, I humbly conceive, *the faith of God's elect*. The converted sinner has reason, indeed, to infer his interest in Christ; but this is a secondary consideration; and the assurance he has, if it arise from its proper source, is rather *a fruit* of faith, than faith itself.

On the other hand, we should not imagine, that *a mere desire of grace, is grace;* or, that a *simple desire* to believe, *is* believing. This, far from being an *axiom* of divine truth, or an undoubted theological principle, must not be admitted, without great limitations. If, indeed, there were no such thing as a sinner desiring grace, or desiring to believe in Christ, for any other than holy pur-

poses, it might be allowed in its full extent: for whoever desires an interest in Jesus, to answer all those purposes which the divine Father intended should be answered by it, may, I think, be justly considered as interested in him: and whoever desires grace, or the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, that the great end of communicating those influences may be fully answered, is, doubtless, a subject of divine grace. But then it is equally manifest, that a sinner may desire grace, and an interest in Jesus Christ, not because he sees and approves the beauty of holiness, or the excellence and glory of the Lord Redeemer; but because he loves *himself*, and is desirous of escaping that misery of which he apprehends himself in danger. To desire Christ and grace, merely because we tremble at the apprehension of damnation, and know that we cannot be saved without the great atonement, and the regenerating energy of the Holy Spirit, has nothing spiritual in it. No; it is nothing more than an effort of natural conscience awakened, attended with some degree of knowledge in the system of divine truth. The case of the *foolish virgins* in the parable, requesting oil of their wiser companions, is, I conceive, a full proof of the point.

I have sometimes heard popular preachers ask their doubting hearers, "Whether they are willing *to part* with Christ, or to *give up* their hope in him?" To which they generally suppose the persons addressed will answer; "No, not for the world!" On which the querists immediately infer; "Then you may assure yourselves that Christ is yours." But this way of talking seems to be an unscriptural method of relieving distressed consciences, and extremely fallacious. For what self-righteous person, what profligate in the world, that calls himself a christian, is willing to give up his hope, or entirely to part with Jesus Christ? No man is, no man *can* be willing to part with his hope, till he is convinced of its falsehood, and another foundation of hope that appears more eligible be presented to him. Nor can any man, without renouncing the christian character, hope for eternal happiness, independent of Jesus Christ and his mediation. Even Socinians, who deny the atonement, and almost all the capital truths of the gospel, will not say; "We hope to be completely saved, *without* the least assistance from the mediation of Jesus Christ."

As it must not be asserted, that *high elevations of religious joy* are a sure sign of believing in the Son of God; so we should be

very cautious of concluding, that a person is an unbeliever, because he is, at present, unexperienced in these raptures. Too many, I fear, infer the important conclusion, *Christ is mine*, rather from such elevations, at certain times, than from any thing else; or, at least, this, with them, is a capital evidence of true faith. Having felt their passions fired in religious exercises, they take it for granted that Christ is theirs, and that they are christians indeed. Far be it from me to represent real christianity as *a gloomy thing;* or, in the least, from discouraging true joy. There certainly is such a thing as religious joy; which, at some times, is "unspeakable and full of glory." But yet we should be very careful of making either the frequency, or the heights, of our joy, the criterion of our faith in Jesus. Is it not very supposable, is it not morally certain, that many of the Jewish pharisees, that many idolatrous devotees of the apostate Romish church, and that many deluded enthusiasts in every age, have been greatly elevated with joy in the performance of religious exercises? It should be carefully observed, however, that I use the term *religious*, not the epithet *spiritual;* between which there is a perceivable and a wide difference.

On the other hand, we cannot safely conclude that every professor who has little or nothing that he can call *joy*, in devotional exercises, is absolutely an unbeliever. This, indeed, we may venture to say, that so far as the truth is known, so far as the gospel is enjoyed, it relieves the alarmed conscience; it inclines the will to God, and affects the heart with sacred pleasure. But though the truth received is calculated to make a person happy in the present state; yet, so many things should be taken into consideration, if we would form a conclusion on the case of one who is destitute of religious joy, that we should be very cautious of asserting, that he who has *no joy*, has *no faith* in the Lord Redeemer. The poor awakened sinner, for instance, whose fervent supplication is, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" who looks to the atonement of Christ for mercy; who centers all his hope of acceptance with God upon it; and who cleaves to it, as the shipwrecked mariner to the plank on which he is floating; though, for the present, harassed with painful apprehensions respecting his final state, and a stranger to religious joy, should not be considered as entirely destitute of grace, or as in a state of unbelief.

As it cannot with safety be affirmed, that every one who deliberately considers himself to have had *very remarkable and striking applications* of divine promises to his mind, is a real believer on the Son of God; so we must not conclude that all who view themselves as inexperienced in such application, are certainly unbelievers. Let none imagine, that I militate against the work of the Holy Spirit, in applying the promises to the hearts of believers; or that my design is to explode the sentiment as unscriptural and enthusiastic. No; far be it, that I should attempt, or imagine any such thing! My intention is to guard against mistakes, and to caution the reader against dangerous delusions. There is, indeed, necessity for the greatest caution in matters of this kind, lest we attribute any thing to the Holy Spirit which is unworthy of his wisdom, his purity, or his grace; and lest we should suppose ourselves to be under his direction, when, in reality, we are under the influence of our own vanity, or of Satan transformed into an angel of light.

That Satan has access to the human mind; that he can, by divine permission, excite thoughts, desires, and aversions in it; and that he can apply the threatenings of scripture to the awakened consciences of sinners, in order to sink them in despair, is generally allowed. Is it less credible, then, Providence permitting, that he should apply the great and precious promises to the mind of a self-elated pharisee, or a carnal professor, in order to render him quite satisfied in his state, and so to deceive, to puff up, and to ruin him? See *Matt.* iv. 6. Satan frequently works on the *pleasing*, as well as the *painful* passions, and that in different ways, as best suited to answer his end. I dare not, therefore, conclude, that I am a partaker of true faith, and one of God's peculiar people, *barely* because I have received remarkable refreshment from the divine promises, when under great discouragements and deep distress. We ought, indeed, to be very thankful to our gracious God, when he really brings the promises to our remembrance and seals them upon our hearts; but then we should be exceeding careful lest we imagine that the application of such, or such gracious declarations is from the Holy Spirit, when we have no reason so to conclude. For if the consolation received from the promises be not attended with the fruits of holiness; if it do not lead to humility and watchfulness, to an increasing affection for God, devotedness to him, and a cordial concern for our neighbour's hap-

piness; it is an evidence that we are deceived, as to the true source of the comforts in question; deceived, either by the ignorance and pride of our own hearts, or by the subtlety of Satan. When the promises are employed by the Holy Spirit, as means of our happiness, and when they have their proper effect on our hearts, they *sanctify* as well as *comfort*. We may venture to assert, that our views of the benefit resulting from those declarations of grace are very partial, if we do not consider them as intended to refine our tempers, to spiritualize our affections, and to engage our hearts and lives in the service of God; as well as to assure us of the divine good-will toward us, and of the divine care over us. See 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. 2 *Pet.* i. 4. Yes, we should ever consider the promises as the great means of our *sanctification*, equally as of our comfort; and there is reason to think, that we do not use the promises aright, except both these ends be kept in view.

Nor ought we to assert, on the other hand, that a person, who cannot recollect the time when he had a powerful application of some divine promise to his conscience, is an unbeliever. Supposing a sinner to be just awakened to a sense of his danger; just brought to see the suitableness, the beauty, and the excellence of Jesus Christ, and come to the Lord Most High with the language of the publican in his heart and in his mouth, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" one who prostrates himself at Jehovah's feet; leaves himself in the hands of sovereign mercy, and relies on the dying Jesus for pardon, peace, and salvation; though, as yet, he has not experienced the application of any particular promise to his mind; now in this case (a case that is very frequent) what must we think? Must we consider such an one as an unbeliever, merely because he knows nothing of any particular promise being applied to his mind, as distinct from the declarations of grace in a general view? I think, nay, I am *confident*, we ought not. In regard to the general course of my own experience, I must confess, that my peace and comfort, respecting an interest in Christ, have not arisen so much from any *particular* promises, as from a *more general view* of the covenant of grace; of the gospel of peace; of the design of our Lord's mediation; of his all-sufficiency, suitableness, and freeness; of the assurances he gives that those who trust in him shall not be disappointed; of the consciousness I have that I do trust in him; and from some other considerations which are more imme-

diately adapted to prove that my faith is genuine. This, I presume, is the case with multitudes of real Christians.

I dare not make any *particular degree* of conscious terrors, or painful convictions of sin, under first awakenings, a certain evidence of believing on the Son of God. Many professors are much harassed in their minds with doubts and fears about the reality of their faith in Christ, on account of their not having experienced such terrors of conscience as others have done. That there are painful and perplexing doubts, arising in the minds of professors from this consideration, I know by experience. But though it be an acknowledged truth and a certain fact, that "the whole have no need of a physician, but those that are sick;" and though it be equally certain, that no one ever did, or will, or can come to Christ, as a Saviour, before he is convinced in his judgment and conscience that he is a condemned criminal and ready to perish; yet, in regard to the *degree* of terror, attending the first convictions of sin, and in respect of its *continuance*, the Great Sovereign deals very differently with different persons, who, on the whole, give equal evidence to others, and have equal reason to conclude in their own consciences, that they are *believers*, *real* believers in Jesus Christ. For, as we read of Saul the persecutor being struck to the earth with astonishment and terror; as we read of the Philippian jailer, and of the three thousand mentioned in the second of Acts, being stung with guilt and rent with anguish, by a keen conviction of their state and their danger; so we read of Zaccheus the publican, of the Samaritan woman, and of many others, who, so far as we can learn from the New Testament, did not experience much terror of that kind. There is reason to think, that light to behold their danger, and grace to relieve their wants, shone into their souls almost at the same instant. I have known many who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and to be greatly oppressed by guilt on their consciences, for a considerable time, who afterwards professed to enjoy peace with God through Jesus Christ; and yet, after all, have given awful evidence that they never "knew the grace of God in truth." On the contrary, I have known others who, for a course of years, have been harassed with doubts and fears, because they have not been *more* distressed for their sins; who have, notwithstanding, to all human appearance, lived in the fellowship of the gospel, and died in the consolations of the Holy Spirit. We should not, therefore, consider ourselves as believers,

chiefly because we once had *a great deal of terror*, which has been succeeded by peace of conscience; nor ought we to consider the reality of our faith as doubtful, barely because we have never been so distressed and terrified about our sins.

Nor should we conclude, that every one who pretends to know, with certainty, *the hour* and *the instrument* of his conversion, is really a believer on the Son of God; or, on the other hand, assert, that a professor who is quite at a loss for the time and particular mean of his effectual calling, is destitute of faith in Jesus Christ. In this, as in the preceding particular, the methods of divine proceeding are different, in regard to different christians. Some, no doubt, have been very precise, in conversation with religious friends, and in the presence of a gospel church, in pointing out the day and the mean which they supposed grace employed in their illumination and conversion; who afterwards gave sorrowful evidence, that they were never born from above. While others, who cannot pretend to mention the time, or the instrument, of their conversion to Christ, have notwithstanding sufficient reason to infer, that they are indeed the children of God.

To conclude this negative part of my subject: As we ought not to consider any man living as being undoubtedly a partaker of that faith which is peculiar to God's elect, barely because of his *extensive knowledge*, or *shining* spiritual gifts; no, nor yet because of his *great usefulness* in the ministerial employ: so, neither, to pronounce any man an unbeliever, merely because he is ignorant of some great doctrinal truths; has wrong views of some divine institutions; can say but little in defence of what he does know; nor is endued with gifts for praying in public to the edification of others. That the most splendid and useful spiritual gifts are no certain proof that the possessor of them is a real saint, appears, from the New Testament, with superior evidence. Witness the apostolic office and powers conferred on Judas; the solemn caution given by our Lord to his disciples, *Luke* x. 20; the distinction which Paul makes between spiritual gifts and charity, in 1 *Cor.* xiii. and the rejected plea for admission into the kingdom of heaven, of which our divine teacher speaks, *Matt.* vii. 22, 23.

Nor should we conclude, that a person is unregenerate, merely because he is ignorant of some great evangelical truths; or of certain divine institutions; or of the constitution and order of a gospel church; or because he is destitute of spiritual gifts. The

apostles themselves, before the ascension of Christ, were very ignorant in many respects: nor is it to be supposed that the three thousand, for instance, who were converted under the apostolic ministry, were at once freed from all their errors and prejudices, relating to the doctrines of grace, and the ordinances of the New Testament. Nay, as to my readers, various of them, it is highly probable, can remember the time, when they had very different views of some doctrines and ordinances from those which they now have; and yet, perhaps, they cannot help thinking, that, if *now* converted, they were so *then*. Though a person may be quite destitute of spiritual gifts, and though his verbal profession of faith in Jesus Christ may be expressed in the most stammering and awkward manner; yet there may be such a concurrence of circumstances; for instance, such an apparent tenderness of conscience, in regard to sin; such a reliance on the gracious promises and watchful providence of God; such a regard to Jesus Christ and to all his people; and such a prevailing concern for the glory of God in the tenor of his conversation, as to leave no room justly to question the reality of his faith in the Son of God. Thus much in the NEGATIVE. I shall now proceed, very briefly, to point out,

POSITIVELY, *a few genuine evidences of faith in the Son of God.* He who really believes in Jesus Christ, *cordially and habitually depends upon him, for pardon and peace, for righteousness and strength.* As faith is an evidence of regeneration, and as in regeneration a sinner is not only informed of his want of Jesus Christ, but has a new turn given to his will, in respect of God and sacred things; so he who sincerely believes on the son of God, feels, if I may so speak, the bias of his will inclining toward him, for pardon, through his atoning sacrifice; for justification, through his perfect obedience; and for strength, to perform the divine precepts. Thus the true believer stands distinguished from all self-righteous professors of every name.

He who truly believes on the Son of God, *habitually* and *cordially approves* the way of salvation, by Jesus Christ, as being not only *safe*, with regard to the sinner, but *worthy* of God, as becoming his character. Many there are, it is to be feared, who care little what becomes of the glory of God, provided they be but saved from the wrath to come. They approve of salvation by Jesus Christ, merely because there is no other way of escaping the punishment due to their crimes; so that the regard which they

nave to the Lord Redeemer, is nothing more than an expression of *self-love*. Whereas true faith leads the converted sinner to rejoice in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, because it displays, asserts, and maintains the honours of eternal justice and of infinite holiness, as well as of divine mercy, in the complete deliverance and consummate happiness of those who deserve to perish.

He who truly believes on the Son of God, *sincerely approves* of the divine revealed will, in regard to *personal holiness and obedience*. It is one thing to *talk* about our Maker's laws, and it is another to *approve* of them. It is one thing to *acknowledge* the necessity of holiness, and it is another to *love* it. Now, as it cannot be imagined how any one that is entirely destitute of love to holiness, can be considered as a believer in Jesus Christ; so we cannot but look upon a sincere and habitual desire of being conformed to the divine image and the divine will, as an evidence of true faith.

He who really believes in Jesus Christ, is *habitually desirous*, except in a time of backsliding, of having *faith*, and *hope*, and *holy love in lively exercise*. This, I humbly conceive, must be the case. That the true believer's faith, and hope, and love, are not always in lively exercise, is an undoubted, though lamentable fact; but that he sincerely and habitually desires they should be so, is an important truth, and one criterion by which he stands distinguished from formal professors of every sort.

Once more: He who really believes on the Son of God, when conscious of open or secret backslidings, will be sincerely desirous of *exercising godly sorrow, and of humbling himself before the Lord*. The true christian regards the frame of his heart in the sight of omniscience, as well as the course of his life in the sight of men. His *latent* backslidings, those which are *internal*, respecting the will and affections, are, therefore, the objects of his detestation, and sources of real sorrow, as well as those departures from the line of duty which are visible to his fellow creatures. Now, as these backslidings, whether open or secret, arise principally from his innate depravity; so that depravity is considered by him as his greatest enemy, and his greatest sin, as being the malignant fountain from which all the streams of his actual transgression flow: and, consequently, is *the grand* occasion of holy shame and penitential sorrow in his daily intercourse with heaven. Yes, the real christian finds abundantly more reason to mourn from day to day over that "sin which dwells in him," than over any thing else:

than over all things besides. So fully am I convinced of this, that I cannot look upon him as a subject of regenerating grace, who does not *find* it to be the case, and *actually* so mourn. This, in my opinion, is one of the best evidences that we love God; and that is the most substantial proof of our faith in Jesus Christ. Particulars might be multiplied, but these may suffice; I shall, therefore, only observe,

I do not mean, that every real believer in Jesus Christ must be *conscious* of possessing all these evidences of true faith, and that at the same time; nor yet that all real christians have them at any time, in the *same degree*. No; at a time of temptation from Satan, in seasons of backsliding from God, and when under the power of melancholy disease; all may appear dark and gloomy in the breast and in the experience of a real christian. It must also be admitted, that the fruits of the Holy Spirit are not equally strong, and lively, and active in *all* believers, nor yet in the *same* believer, at different times. It should be carefully remembered also, that the conclusion we form of ourselves, as believers, or unbelievers, is not to be inferred from *transient* and *merely occasional* dispositions of mind toward holy or forbidden objects; but from the *habitual*, or *generally prevailing* turn of our hearts. BOOTH.

ON THE IMPROPER USE OF REASON IN EXAMINING DIVINE REVELATION.

IT must be acknowledged that, though a blind attachment to certain favourite names has proved, to the generality of mankind, a copious source of error; an overweening conceit of their own reason has not proved less effectual in seducing many who affect to be considered as rational inquirers. In these I have often observed a fundamental mistake, in relation to the proper province of the reasoning faculty. With them, reason is held the standard of truth; whereas, it is, primarily, no more than the test or the touchstone of evidence, and, in a secondary sense only, the standard of truth. Now the difference between these two, however little it may appear on a superficial view, is very great. When God revealed his will to men, he gave them sufficient evidence, that the information conveyed to them by his ministers, was a revelation from him. And it cannot be justly doubted that, without such evidence, their unbelief and rejection of his ministers

would have been without guilt. *The works*, said our Lord, *which the Father hath given me to finish, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.** And again: *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.*† His works were sufficient evidence that what he taught was by commission from God; and without such evidence, he acknowledges their unbelief would have been blameless; whereas, on the contrary, having gotten such evidence, there was nothing further they were entitled to, and consequently their disbelief was inexcusable.

Some modern rationalists will say, "Is not the subject itself submitted to the test of reason, as well as the evidence?" It is readily granted, that a subject may be possessed of such characters as are sufficient ground of rejecting it in point of evidence, and is, therefore, in this respect, submitted to the test of reason. If any thing were affirmed that is self-contradictory, or any thing enjoined that is immoral, we have sufficient internal evidence, that such things cannot proceed from the Father of lights, and the Fountain of good, which all the external proofs that could be produced on the other side would never be able to surmount. The proofs, in that case, might confound, but could not rationally convince, the understanding. We may, for example, venture to assert, that no conceivable evidence from without, could render the theology of Hesiod or Homer, in any degree, credible. Thus far, therefore, it will be allowed, that reason is entitled to examine and judge concerning the subject itself: for there may be something in the subject that may serve as evidence, either in its favour, or against it. At the same time it must be owned that, the more the subject is above the things which commonly fall under the discussion of our faculties, the narrower is the range of our reason; insomuch that, in things so far beyond our reach, as those may be supposed to be, which are conveyed by revelation from God, there is hardly any internal character that can be considered as sufficient to defeat a claim, otherwise well supported, but either, as has been said, absurdity or immorality.

Now, here lies the principal difference between the impartial seekers of truth, whose minds are unbiassed on every side, and those who, under the appearance of exalted human reason, ido-

* Jo. v. 36. † Jo. xv. 24.

lize all their own conceptions and prejudices. I speak not of those who reject revelation altogether; but of those who, whilst they admit the truth of the christian revelation in general, consider their own reason as competent to determine, and prejudge, as I may say, what it is fit for God, either to declare as truth, or to command as duty. Such people, for example, if they do not discover an useful purpose that any particular declaration in scripture can answer, boldly conclude, in defiance of the clearest positive evidence, that it is not there: if they cannot divine the intention of providence in the production of any being, or order of beings, of which there may be frequent mention in holy writ, they infer that such being, or order of beings, notwithstanding the notice there taken of them, does not exist. They will not admit the reality of an operation, of which they do not perfectly comprehend the manner, though the former may be a matter clearly revealed in scripture, the latter not. Now the rejection of the aid of reason altogether (the common error of fanatics of every denomination), and such a conviction as that now described of its all-sufficiency, are extremes which the judicious, but humbleminded christian, will think it incumbent on him equally to guard against.

Indeed, those deifiers of human reason, of whom I have been speaking, seem, all the while, to mistake the province of reason. They proceed on the supposition, that, from her own native stock, she is qualified for the discovery of truth; of all such truths, at least, as are of any consequence to a man to be aquainted with. The fact is nearly the reverse: for except those things which pass within our own minds, and which we learn solely from what is called consciousness, and except the deductions made from self-evident or mathematical axioms, all our information relating to fact, or existence of any kind, is from without. Hence all our knowledge of arts, sciences, languages; of history, philosophy, and every thing in which human life is concerned. Do I, by this, mean to depreciate human reason as a thing of little consequence? Far from it. Reason, I am sensible, is absolutely necessary to render us capable of that information from without, by which we are enabled to make so great progress in knowledge. For want of this power entirely, or at least in the requisite degree, how little, comparatively, is the greatest knowledge which the most sagacious of the brute creation can attain? I cannot,

therefore, be justly thought to derogate from a faculty which, by my hypothesis, constitutes the radical distinction between man and beast. Would a man be understood to depreciate that admirable organ of the body, the eye, because he affirmed, that unless the world, which is without the body, furnished us with light, our eyes could be of no service to us? Reason is the eye of the mind: it is in consequence of our possessing it, that we are susceptible either of religion or of law. Now the light by which the mental eye is informed, comes also from without, and consists chiefly in testimony, human or divine.

I would recommend it, therefore, to those who are accounted the most refined rationalists in religion to take the trouble to reflect a little, and inquire what is the method which they, and indeed all, must follow, in the acquisition of human knowledge. In natural history, for example, how insignificant would be our progress, if our conviction were to be regulated by the same maxims by which those men seem to regulate their faith in matters of revelation? If our not knowing the use of any thing were a sufficient reason for disbelieving its existence, how many animals, how many vegetables, how many inanimate substances, apparently useless, or even noxious, should we discard out our systems of nature, inflexibly denying that they exist any where, except in the disordered imaginations of men? Nor should we make greater proficiency in the other branches of science. Of nothing have we clearer evidence than of this, that by means of the food which animals swallow, life is preserved, the body is nourished, the limbs gradually advance in strength and size, to their full maturity. Yet, where is the philosopher, where is the chemist, who can explain, or who will pretend to understand, the process whereby the nourishment is converted into chyle, and the chyle into blood, and the blood into skin and flesh, and bones and sinews?

Now if, in matters of science, merely human, our ignorance of the use, in the one case, and of the manner of operation, in the other, does not preclude our belief of the fact, a belief which ultimately rests, in most cases, on the testimony of our fellow creatures; can we think it reasonable to be more shy of admitting a fact, on the testimony of God, when, in effect, we admit that sufficient ground is given us to conclude that we have his testimony? For I do not here argue, with the deniers of revelation,

but with those who, professing to believe it, reject its obvious meaning. Are we better acquainted with things divine than with things human? or with things eternal than with things temporal? Our Lord, in his conversation with Nicodemus, seemed to consider it as an acknowledged truth, that things earthly are more level to the natural capacity of man than things heavenly.* Yet how soon would an effectual stop be put to our progress in every branch, even of earthly science, were we to lay down as maxims, that the existence of any being, however well attested, whereof we cannot discover the use, is not to be believed; and that the production of an effect, if we do not comprehend the mode of operation in the cause, is incredible? The much greater part of all human knowledge, whether of things corporeal, or things spiritual, things terrestrial, or things celestial, is originally from information. Revelation means no other than information from God; and whatever human knowledge we derive from the testimony of our fellow mortals, which is more than ninety-nine parts in a hundred of all we are possessed of, is, if I may be allowed the expression, a revelation from man. In regard to both we ought, no doubt, in the first place, to be satisfied that we have the proper testimony: but when this point is ascertained, I think it unaccountable to reject the obvious meaning of the divine testimony (which is indirectly to reject the testimony), on grounds which no judicious person would think sufficient to warrant him in rejecting the testimony of a man of character. If ye have not satisfactory evidence, that what claims to be the testimony of God is really such, ye are no doubt entitled to reject it. But do not first admit the testimony, and afterwards refuse your assent to what it manifestly implies; and that for such a reason as would prove no obstacle to your assent, on the information of a fellow-mortal. This is surely the reverse of what might be expected from a humble pious christian. *For if we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater.*†

Besides, this conduct, in rejecting the obvious sense of the divine testimony, is the more inexcusable, as the circumstance on which the rejection is founded, is such as the whole analogy of nature leads us to expect, in all the works of the Creator. If, in every part of the creation, we find that there are many crea-

* Jo. iii. 12. † Jo. v. 9.

tures, the purpose of whose existence we cannot investigate; and that there are hardly any natural productions in which, though, from experience, we may discover the cause, we can trace its operation; it is but just to conclude, that this unsearchableness to human faculties, is a sort of signature impressed on the works of the Most High, and which, when found in any thing attested as from him, ought to be held, at least, a presumption in favour of the testimony. CAMPBELL.

MISCELLANY, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

THE VICES OF THE INDIANS.

Extract from a Missionary Sermon.

MY BRETHREN,

In the interior of the country we inhabit, there are thousands of Indians who are covered with gross darkness. We have brought our families and our manners to their shores, let us show them, that we have brought with us a volume which may prove a light unto their feet and a lamp to their paths. Let us point them to the mark of the prize of the high calling of christians, a mark by which they may "steer" with confidence through "the wilderness" of this perplexing world.

Let neither their *imagined* virtues* nor their *real* vices prevent your exertions.

Are Indians *unclean?* Send the gospel among them. This will teach every one how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour. It will show to them that marriage is honourable in all, and

* "It has become fashionable of late years for the philosophers of Europe to celebrate the virtues of the savages of America.—Whether the design of their encomiums was to expose christianity and depreciate the advantages of civilization, I know not, but they have evidently had those effects upon the minds of weak people." Dr. *Rush's Essays.*

From the travels of Charlevoix, Hennepen, Carver, &c. the doctor demonstrates that *uncleanness, nastiness, drunkenness, gluttony, treachery, cruelty, idleness, theft, gaming,* and *the degrading of their women* are common vices. He concludes a short, but very instructive essay on the subject with saying; "How great is the efficacy of Christianity, which by purifying the heart, renders the practice of the contrary virtues natural and agreeable!"

the bed undefiled; but that whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Are they *filthy* in their manners and persons? Send them the gospel. They will learn from it to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, their bodies will be washed as with pure water. The body will be respected when regarded as a temple for the Holy Ghost. Health and cleanliness follow the pious observance of the Lord's day.

Are Indians *drunkards?* Send the gospel among them. Let missionaries cry at the door of their tents, Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness! Wo unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, that continue unto night, until wine (or rum) inflame them. When they know that drunkenness at last biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder, and that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God, we may expect that by this vice, whole tribes will be no more destroyed, and that Indians will cease to glory in their shame.

Are they *gluttonous?* Send them the gospel, and their belly will soon cease to be their God. The body will be kept under, and be brought into subjection. Assisted to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, provision will not be made for the flesh to fulfil its lusts. They will use the world as not abusing it.

Are Indians *treacherous?* Send the gospel among them, that they may have their conversation in simplicity and godly sincerity. It is only by this means that with respect to public treaties, or private dealings, you will be prevented from saying their tongue is *an arrow shot out*, it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably with his mouth, but in heart he lieth wait. Embracing the religion of the king of truth, they will become true men.

Are they *cruel?* Send them the gospel! Instead of regarding compassion as effeminacy, they will consider it as a mark of human greatness. Instruments of cruelty shall be sought for in vain, in their habitations. Under the influence of christianity the scalping knife and the hatchet will become useless, and the warwhoop and deathsong be forgotten. The lion and the wolf shall become gentle as the kid or the lamb. That heart cannot be cruel in which the love of God is shed abroad.

Are Indians *idle?** Send the gospel among them. We command you, say the apostles, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. We beseech you that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, that ye may walk honestly.

Are they *dishonest?* Send them the gospel. Let them know, that this is the will of God that no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the avenger of all such. Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good. Let none suffer as a thief.

Are Indians fond of *gaming?* Send the gospel among them. By teaching its converts to come out from ungodly company, to care for them of their own household, and to shun deceit and lying, it destroys the injurious practice. Such who beguile unstable souls, having hearts exercised with covetous practices are cursed children. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, who shall receive the reward of unrighteousness.

Are they in the habit of *degrading* their women? Send them the gospel, which says, Let the husband render to the wife due benevolence, giving honour to her as the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life. Let every one of you love his wife even as himself.

The gospel is suited to the removal of the vices which disgrace the Indian tribes; and where it is received in power, instead of the brier, will come up the fir tree, and instead of the thorn, the myrtle tree. Instead of uncleanness, there will be purity; instead of drunkenness, sobriety; instead of treachery, integrity; instead of cruelty, mercy; instead of indolence, industry; instead of theft, honesty; and instead of contempt for females, the mother, the wife, the daughter, and the sister will be loved and respected as tender, faithful friends.

* "Their work advances under their hand with such slowness, that an eyewitness compares it to the imperceptible progress of vegetation. They spend so many years in forming a canoe, that it often begins to rot with age, before they finish it." *Robertson's* America.

MATRIMONIAL CONNEXIONS.

Mr. Editor,

Having in some of the former numbers of your valuable miscellany read several papers on the religious education of children, I beg leave to present you with a few thoughts on a subject intimately connected with it, and for want of a due attention to which this important branch of christian duty has been in too many instances neglected. The subject to which I refer is, *The evil and danger of a serious person forming a matrimonial connexion with one who gives no satisfactory evidence of being a partaker of divine grace.*

It will be readily admitted by all true christians that the sacred scriptures are the prescribed rule of their duty. If we take them for our guide, we shall find they speak a language plain and decided on this subject. Of how much importance it was accounted in the early ages of the world, we may learn from the conduct of Abraham, who made his servant swear by the God of heaven and earth that he would not take his son a wife of the daughters of Canaan, among whom he dwelt; but one of his own country and kindred. (Gen. xxiv. 3, 4.) The anxiety which Isaac and Rebeccah felt lest Jacob should enter into a matrimonial connexion with any of the daughters of the land, and the solemn charge they gave him to the contrary, are recorded in Gen. xxvii. 46. xxviii. 1, 2. The conduct of Esau, who married into the families of those who were "strangers from the covenant of promise," produced the most poignant grief in the hearts of his venerable parents. (Gen. xxvi. 35.) We may also learn something of the evil and danger of the practice to which we refer, if we read the solemn injunctions given to the Israelites by God himself, not to intermarry with the Canaanites. (Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.) If we turn to the New Testament, we shall find the path of duty clearly marked out, and the conduct we should adopt in this matter plainly defined. What does the apostle intend when he exhorts us not to be "*unequally* yoked together with unbelievers?" (2 Cor. vi. 14.) Or what does he design when he says, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, *only in the Lord?*" (1 Cor. vii. 39.) Certainly he designs to point out in the strongest manner the ab-

solute necessity of real believers marrying only such as they have some good reason to believe are converted persons.

The evil and danger of the practice I am condemning will appear from the baneful effects of such union to the parties themselves. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" All real and lasting affection in the matrimonial state must be founded on a similarity of views, designs, feelings, expectations, and pursuits. But are there not joys, and sorrows, and hopes, which one of the parties, if a child of God, must necessarily possess, with which the other must be unacquainted? How uncomfortable and distressing must it be to a serious man not to be able to make known those sorrows which at times overwhelm his soul, to the wife of his bosom, with any expectation of obtaining relief from her. How painful to think the person to whom I am allied in the closest and most endearing ties, is not morally qualified to share with me in those joys of faith, of which through grace, I am the happy partaker, and which are unspeakable and full of glory. The human mind derives both pleasure and support from mutual sympathy. Its joys are enhanced, and its sorrows are diminished, by the consideration that there are those who are dear to us, who share in the former, and have felt the latter.

The evil and danger of such connexions will be farther evident, if we trace their direful consequences in reference to the children of such persons. The duties incumbent on christian parents towards their children are solemn and important. By the high authority of God, they are commanded to train them up in the way they should go; to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As means to be employed for these ends, it is supposed that parents will use their utmost endeavours to instil into their minds those principles which are taught in the inspired pages, and which are inseparably connected with the honour of God, and the salvation of men. Are not christian parents under solemn obligations frequently to pray with and for their children? Is it not expected that they should show them the way to heaven, not only by their precepts, but also by their example? How can these and other important duties be performed aright, if one of the parents be an utter stanger to the influence of the gospel? If he have light views of the importance of divine things himself, is it to be expected that he will recommend them with earnestness to his offspring? Will not the consequence of such negligence be,

that his little ones will grow up in ignorance and guilt; and, if the grace of God do not prevent, perish eternally?

The relation which christian families bear to the church of God, is another important consideration. As the church is the place in which God trains up his people for heaven, so the families of christians are the nurseries for the church. From whence are we to look for a succession of persons to advance the honour of Christ, and to support the credit of his gospel, but from the families of believers? Is it not a fact, confirmed by testimony and observation in all ages, that the breaches made by death in the church have been ordinarily filled up by the children of pious parents; or at least, that there has been a greater number of these, than of those who have been called from out of the world? As this is one of the ends which God has in view in forming his people into a church state, so should it ever be regarded by christians when they enter into the conjugal relation. For, as the prophet Malachi says, (ii. 15.) "Did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit: and wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed." But how is it to be expected that families should furnish successive members of the church of the Redeemer, if parents do not unite their exertions to train up their children in the knowledge and fear of God? Will not the unbelieving wife weaken the hands of the believing husband? And will not the unconverted husband frustrate in a considerable degree all the pious endeavours, and render of no effect all the seasonable advice, of his believing partner? And is it not a subject worthy of our serious inquiry, whether the decrease of numbers, and the declension in vital godliness, which are so visible in many of our churches, are not to be traced up to this as one of its sources? I would only ask whether some parents, professing to be sincere christians, have not been more desirous that their children should marry into *rich* than *religious* families? And, alas, have not too many young persons who have called themselves the disciples of Christ, when they have entered into the connubial state, rather sought to form connexions that might augment their property, increase their trade, and introduce them to the acquaintance of the great and rich, than to endeavour to procure such a partner as might be an instrument of promoting the interests of genuine christianity, and of advancing the purity and felicity of the church of God? I have known many instances in which persons who have stood in the relation

of members to some churches, have acted in this manner; and if any thing I have suggested have the happy tendency of preventing an increase of their number, I shall feel satisfied, and render all the glory to Him to whom it is due. K. R.

SATAN AMONG THE SONS OF GOD.

The saints are a poor and an afflicted people; but they trust in the name of the Lord, and their confidence is not in vain; for "none of them who trust in him shall be desolate." The Father of mercies has made a rich provision for them, and the sabbath is their feastday. With sacred delight they hasten to the temple, "in simplicity and godly sincerity," to present themselves before the Lord, each supplicating by the way, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting!"

"The Lord loveth the gates of Zion," and he is pleased to recognise his people as his sons and daughters; but he will cause them to sing of mercy and judgment; and while he bestows grace in the wilderness, they shall be kept in remembrance that it is a wilderness still: "that is not their rest; it is polluted." He does not invariably command the blessing; but sometimes permits their souls to be harassed by the enemy, even in their most devotional exercises: Thus, "When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them." (Job i. 6.)

In the character of the prince of the power of the air, Satan is permitted to hover round, and sometimes to overshadow them with his gloomy wings; having studied human nature nearly 6000 years, he is well acquainted with their particular propensities and weakest side; he assiduously observes their devotions; and perceives where they are sincere, and where they are hypocritical. By external signs, he forms his judgment of internal feelings. He stretches his sceptre across the imagination, and what he wants in power and knowledge, he attempts to supply by perseverance and subtlety. Thus he continues his operations on the mind, and often prevails so far as to alienate the affections from God. How often does he insinuate into the mind of the minister either cowardly timidity, or a vain display of talent! If *a cowardly timidity*, then "the fear of man bringeth a snare;" and iniquity is no longer exposed; but "peace, peace," is proclaimed "where there is no

peace." If *a vain display of talent*, then they preach themselves, instead of "Christ crucified;" the language is elevated above the understanding of the common people; or vain philosophy is substituted for the simplicity of the gospel!

In the congregation a variety of artifices are necessary: here he dissipates the attention, and calls up ten thousand objects to engage the mind in trifles, and keep it unaffected with the importance of sacred truth. "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." In another case, he reverses the application; the word, not being guided by the Spirit of God, comes not in the words of Nathan to David, "Thou art the man;" but, being guided by Satan, he influences the hearer to apply it to every one but himself. Among one class of hearers he diffuses an angry spirit; and the evil propensities, the depraved principles of human nature are roused to oppose the artillery of heaven! With the most humble and spiritual hearers he is the most active. He spreads over the simple experimental evidences of grace a dark gloom, so that the believer can scarcely hope he is interested in mercy. He tries to impede the growth of holy principles, and adds new burdens to the mind. He would insinuate erroneous sentiments, or enthusiastic feelings; in fine, any thing which has a tendency toward a defective profession.

Thus the great enemy "goeth about seeking whom he may devour," and attempting to contract the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; and if but one soul is kept from receiving benefit on the day when the sons of God present themselves before the Lord, Satan has his object.

Beware of this adversary; exercise a vigorous and watchful opposition; but tremble not because of your own inferiority; recollect, through the strength of Christ, you can do all things; "resist the devil, and he will flee from you." SINCERUS.

DESCRIPTION OF PAUL'S PERSON.

How little stress is to be laid on external appearance! This prince of apostles seems to hint, concerning himself, that his bodily presence was not calculated to command respect at first sight. (2 Cor. x. 10.) St. Chrysostom terms him, *homuncionem tricubita-*

Item, "a little man, about three cubits, [or four feet and an half] in height."

Lucian, or whoever is the author of the Philopatris, is supposed to have had St. Paul in view, where he introduces "A Galilean" (for so the christians were contemptuously styled,) "rather baldheaded, with an aquiline nose, who travelled through the air into the third heaven."

But, of all other writers, Nicephorus Callistus has given us the most circumstantial account of St. Paul's person. [Lib. 2, Cap. 37.] "St. Paul was small of stature, stooping, and rather inclinable to crookedness: palefaced, of an elderly look, bald on the head. His eyes, lively, keen, and cheerful; shaded in part by his eyebrows, which hung a little over. His nose, rather long, and not ungracefully bent. His beard, pretty thick of hair, and of a sufficient length; and, like his locks, interspersed with grey."

Toplady's Works, Vol. iii. p. 484.

THE JEWISH CITIES OF REFUGE.

In the division of the land of Canaan forty-eight cities were sequestered for the use of the levites. Of these cities six were appointed as places of refuge, into which the man who had unwittingly killed another might flee, and there be protected from the slain person's nearest kinsman, who, according to the custom of nations in that day, was the avenger of his blood.

The cities, for the greater convenience and security of those who had occasion to use them, were sequestered, in different parts of the country, some on each side of the river Jordan. And, the Jewish writers say, particular care was taken, that the roads to them from all parts should be straight, wide and smooth, and that way-marks should be placed at every turn to guide the fugitives.

When a person came and claimed admittance into any one of these cities, the elders examined his case at the entrance of the gate, and if there was no evidence of intentional murder, he was taken into protection. He was, however, afterwards brought to a trial, before the proper judges, in the district where the deceased person was slain. If he was found guilty of real murder, he was taken from God's altar, and delivered up to suffer the punishment due to his crime. If he was not found guilty, he was sent back to

the city, there to remain until the death of the high priest, when he might return to his possesion and live unmolested.

To understand the reason and propriety of this singular institution, we should advert to the difference between civilization in that age and in ages since.

In the state of nature, in which men first existed, every man was the avenger of his own wrongs; and in case of murder, in which the sufferer could not avenge himself, the nearest of kin was his avenger; for among the living he was considered as the greatest sufferer. From this state of nature the Jews were now beginning to emerge. God was now bringing them under a regular civil government, under which every reputed offender should be entitled to a trial before he suffered punishment, and should no longer be subject to the vengeance of the party injured, or of his near relatives, who would usually be influenced more by passion than by right; more by their immediate feelings, than by cool reason. But as it would be extremely difficult to reclaim the Jews at once from their former custom, sanctioned by length of time and by general usage, especially in cases of supposed murder; and as the avenger of blood, in such cases, would be likely to execute vengeance, if it was in his power, without waiting for the slow process of law, so God was pleased to provide a way, in which the reputed murderer might escape the avenger, obtain a fair trial, make his defence, and if he was innocent secure his life. This institution, though it may appear as a hardship on the innocent, yet was a hardship necessarily arising from the then uncivilized state of mankind, and was the best security that could be provided. Even in civilized and regular society, an innocent person suspected of, and brought to trial for murder, or any other high crime, suffers much from the circumstances which unavoidably precede and attend his trial; and often he suffers more from the malignant passions and envenomed tongues of vile and unprincipled men. If the innocent man, suspected of murder, suffered more under the Jewish government, than such a person would do in the present state of society, the fault was not in that government, but in the savage customs and habits of that age.

The manslayer, being acquitted from the charge of wilful murder, was to remain in the city of refuge, until the death of the high priest. Length of time would soften the resentment of

the revenger, and the universal and long continued mourning, which followed the priest's death, would obliterate the impressions made by the unhappy casualty, and extinguish the passion of private revenge; so that by this time the prisoner might be enlarged without personal danger. Or if any lurking malice remained in the avenger's bosom, it would be restrained by the consideration, that by executing his malice now, he exposed himself to suffer as a murderer.

This was the political reason of the institution. The moral use of it is suggested by the apostle, in the 6th chap. to the Hebrews, where having stated the promises of the gospel, he says, "We have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us."

Man, as a moral and rational being, is bound to a moral and rational conduct. God has given him a law for the government of his heart and life, and to this law has annexed sanctions of reward and punishments. To obedience the law insures life. To transgression it threatens death. A law, as such, makes no provision for pardon. Viewed in relation to the law, the sinner is like the murderer without a place of refuge. The law condemns him, death is denounced against him, and justice pursues him. Where shall he find security? There is a strong tower into which he may run and be safe. Jesus hath borne our sins on the cross, magnified the law by his obedience, and satisfied the demand of justice by his death. There is now no condemnation to them who are in him.

Those cities were provided for *strangers* and *sojourners*, as well as for native Jews. In this respect they prefigured the extent of gospel grace, which makes no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, bond and free. All are one in Christ Jesus.

The manslayer, in order to his security, must *flee to the city*. If he remained in his house or loitered on the road, till the avenger found him, the city would avail him nothing. So it is on the gospel plan. We must flee for refuge by repentance and faith; else we cannot appropriate the hope set before us. The impenitent, unbelieving sinner has no more security, than the manslayer, who remained at a distance from the city; no more security than if a Saviour had never appeared.

The security of the fugitive depended on his *abiding* in the city. We must continue in Christ's word, else we are not his

disciples indeed. Convictions, prayers, resolutions, and professions are not sufficient. We must heartily and unreservedly give ourselves up to the Saviour, and be faithful to the death. Whatever good beginnings we seem to make in religion, if we renounce them, and turn to that course of sin, which we pretend to have forsaken, all that we have done is vain. He that believes to the saving of his soul, is one who lives by faith.

The way to the city was made *straight and plain*, that the fugitive might effect his escape. With equal plainness has the gospel marked out the way of salvation; it is a high way, in which the wayfaring man need not err.

The city of refuge was not a human device, but a divine provision. Such is the gospel dispensation. We had no hand in contriving it, no influence in procuring it, no concern in framing or introducing it; but it originated wholly in the wisdom and mercy of God. We are saved by grace.

The deliverance of the manslayer was attended with some *humiliating circumstances*. He must leave his worldy interests and connexions, and trust to the care of providence in the place assigned him. The gospel requires us to renounce all sin, all wordly affections, and all confidence in ourselves, that we may win Christ and be found in him.

These cities gave great consolation to the manslayer; but much stronger is the consolation, which the gospel gives to the awakened sinner.

Those cities afforded security only to the man who had shed blood *unwittingly*. But "through Christ is preached the forgiveness of all sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses."

The cities of refuge were *few* in number; and though they were appointed in different parts of the country, they could not be near to every inhabitant. But our city of defence is near to all, and whosoever will may enter into it and find safety.

Those cities secured to the fugitives only a *temporal* life, and this but for a short time. If they died not by the hand of the avenger, still they must die. But they who believe on the Saviour have *spiritual* and *eternal* life in him, and "they will never perish, nor will any pluck them out of his hands."

The safety of the manslayer was attended with a kind of *bondage*. The believer, under the gospel is delivered from bondage, as well as from danger. He is justified from the guilt, and rescued from the dominion of sin, admitted to peace with God, allowed near access to him in prayer; and he anticipates more intimate communion with him in heaven.

What anxiety must distract the mind of the unhappy man, who had casually shed his neighbour's blood? The terror of a pursuing avenger added to the distress for an afflicted family and an unfortunate fellow creature, must be tormenting. Is not the condition of an impenitent sinner far more miserable? Really guilty before God, and every moment exposed to the eternal curse of a righteous law, how can he enjoy peace, or feel quietness in his mind? But there is a blessed hope set before him. Pardon is procured by a great price, and offered with abundant grace. There is a city of refuge near at hand; the gates are open; the way to it is short and plain. Let him flee for refuge and lay hold on the hope set before him. What strong consolation have true believers. They have already laid hold on this hope; and this is an anchor of their souls both sure and stedfast, which enters, not into an earthly city of refuge, but into that holy place within the veil, whither Jesus himself has entered for them. There he is a priest for ever, and by one offering he has perfected for ever them who are sanctified. ERASTUS.

A MOST STRIKING OCCURRENCE.

MR. HENRY, on Luke xxiv. 30. *Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*, has the following observations: " If there were really no spirits or apparitions of spirits, as by this and other instances, it is plain the disciples did believe there were; now had been a proper time for Christ to have undeceived them, by telling them there were no such things: but he seems to take it for granted, that there have been and may be apparitions of spirits; else what needed so much pains to prove that *he* was not one?" Without attempting to decide on a question concerning which great and good men are divided in opinion, we lay before our readers the subsequent narration. We have received it from a gentleman of this city, on whose veracity we rely. It may serve at leat to show that God, in his providence

will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and that the way of transgressors is hard.

"Some years ago a young man of my acquaintance, lodged for a few weeks at my father's house. I slept in the same room with him. One night I was awakened by his loud exclamations, which I attributed to his being disturbed in dreaming. I called his name several times, but without any effect. I was about going to awake him, when I perceived his agitation subside. He soon after told me, that he would take an opportunity of explaining to me the cause of his alarm. This he did, the ensuing morning, and to the following effect."

"For nearly a year past, I have been acquainted with a young lady of a decent family, but, inferior in property to my own. By frequent intercourse our passion for each other became strong. One evening, listening only to its imperious dictates, forgetful of the commands of God and the consequences of sin, our connexion became criminal. Sometime after she disclosed to me her situation and earnestly importuned me to save her reputation by a fulfilment of my promises. I proposed to her to retreat a distance from her father's house, but to the measure she would not consent. Convinced that marriage would be followed with my being deprived of all my expected fortune, such were the temper and system of my relations, I was obliged to leave the place and have come hither.

"Last night, when you heard my screams, I was not asleep. I was fully awake. At that very moment I saw her at the side of my bed, pale and apparently in anguish. She looked steadily at me, and taking both my hands pressed them in such a manner that I was not able to move myself. I was in this state, probably ten minutes."

Thus far was the communication of the young man. Two days after he received a letter from her brother, mentioning that after the birth of a daughter she died; having undergone a most painful scene of suffering. The hour of her dissolution corresponded exactly with that in which the young man had awakened me by his dreadful cries.

ANECDOTE.

The following anecdote is well authenticated, and stands recommended by an artless simplicity.

Conversation between the Rev. Mr. M. and Pagey an Indian.

P. Do you know any ting, sir, of Jesus Christ?

M. I trust I do.

P. O blessed for ever Jesus Christ, he make white man know him, he make poor Indian know him, blessed for ever, Amen.

M. How did you find Jesus Christ?

P. I no findee him, he findee me.

M. Where did he find you?

P. I was a work in my field a hoeing my corn, and den I tink I hear someting say Pagey! Ah, I look but I see noting. So I stooped down again and I hoe my corn, and I tink I hear someting say Pagey! I cry out what a you say? but I see noting, and I feel cold on my head. I go up high hill and look round but I see noting, den I tink I hear someting say again, Pagey! I cry out what a you say? and I tink he say to me Pagey! you know who gave a you dat corn? I say no, and he say Jesus Christ gave you dat corn; I fall on my face on a ground, and I cry, cry, when I tink a blessed Jesus give poor drunken Indian corn.

M. What, Pagey do you get drunk now?

P. O no, me never be drunk again after Jesus Christ tell a me he give a me dat corn; so den I go home to my wigwam (his house or hut) and see a my squaw, (his wife)—my squaw be a drunk. I take up a tick for a beat a my squaw, but while I hold up a my hand to beat a my squaw, I tink I hear my blessed Jesus say, Pagey! Jesus Christ a beat a you when you was drunken Indian? So den I trow down my tick and I fall on my face, and I cry, and I pray for my squaw, and blessed Jesus hear me, and my poor squaw never get drunk any more. O blessed for ever Jesus Christ, Amen!——One man he ask a me, Pagey! who is best, you or your brother Deacon? I say no best, Jesus Christ best, blessed for ever Amen?—Dey tell a me I must tink dare be tree in God, and but one God, so I tell a my blessed Jesus, and he say, Pagey! you know de rain? yes; and you know de hail? yes; and you know de snow? yes; Well, you know de rain be water, de snow be water, and de hail be water; but they are all one water;—I jump up, I have a I have a.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—AFRICA.

The Journal of the Missionaries Anderson and Jantz, at Klaar Water, on the north of the Great River, from October 1807 to March 1808, has lately been received; from which we make the following extract:

"THE attendance on our preaching, especially on the sabbath day, is still pleasing; but we have not lately perceived any powerful work among the careless and unconverted: our labours seem to be most blessed in building up those who have believed through grace.

"October 26, &c. The following persons, after giving a satisfactory account of their conversion to God, have been received into the church by baptism: Piet Pienard and Piet Goejeman, our two interpreters; Andries Waterboer, a young man, who has acquired a good knowledge of the Bible, and who has distinguished himself above all our people in receiving instruction; Old Barend, Old Solomon Kok, Jan Mechiel, Jan Kok, Willem Fortuyn, and his wife Mary Dorothea, Nicholas Barend, and Klaas Barend. Afterwards were baptized Adam Barlie, Peter David, Hendrick Hendricks, Fryn Prins, Eva Barend (the wife of Klaas Barend) Old Griet Barend, now called *Margarette*, and Sarah Pomer.

"This commencement to form a church from among the heathen in the remote part of the world, will, we hope, be accompanied with a special blessing from the great Head of the church; so that we may yet see greater things than these, and our latter end be made greatly to increase.

"December 25. According to the custom of the Dutch church, the death of our dear Redeemer was commemorated. Brother Anderson preached from Luke ii. 8—15, and served at the table. The service was solemn; and we experienced some agreeable exercises of mind, which none will wonder at, if they place themselves for a moment in our situation, or consider that after sojourning for so long a time in this wilderness without this ordinance, we had now an opportunity to celebrate the death of our gracious Lord.

"We have lately lost a very useful woman, whose name was Old Dortje: her father was a European: she was baptized when a

child; and could read and write. When brothers Anderson and Kramer came here, they found five whom she had taught to spell. A few weeks before her illness she was received a member of our infant church. She found much support in her dying hours. She was about 45 years of age: she was remarkably useful among us with her needle, and as a midwife. She was highly esteemed, and is greatly lamented. It is remarkable, that her husband died of the small pox in September last, and she of the measles (which have greatly prevailed) on the 12th of December.

The Births and Deaths in 1807, *have been as follows:*

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Births, —	23	22	45
Deaths, —	17	20	37

Of the above, 6 died of the small pox, and 4 of the measles.

RUSSIA.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. J. S. Huber, Minister of a Reformed, or Calvinistic Congregation in the German Colonies, near the Wolga, in the Russian Empire, dated Catharinanstadt, the 8th of December, 1807.

"In the German colonies, near the Wolga, there are sixteen Protestant clergymen, and nine Roman Catholic priests, of the order of the Jesuits. The number of the settlements amounts to about 100; that of families to 12,000; and the whole population to upwards of 40,000 individuals. I have been here since the 10th of October, and found plenty of work. Blessed be God, the people love his word! The little tracts which I had with me were received, I might almost say seized upon, with an eagerness you have no idea of. Oh, my brethren! had I but the crumbs that fall from your tables! Books are excessively dear in our parts. Alas! we have no such booksellers as you have, and are very scantily supplied with Bibles; but to my great satisfaction, I hear that this want will be relieved by the generous donation of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Ah! had I but a small printingpress, I should immediately set about learning the art of printing! Even if I could print but an A B C book, I might do a deal of good; for our present spelling-book is of the most wretched sort, and yet costs 25 copecks. Our schools are in a deplorable situation, and good books are a rarity.

I have already composed several tracts; but cannot print them at my own expense. Oh! that a friend of God would interest himself in this cause, which is really not my own, but the Lord's. When I first came to my present situation, I found not even a schoolmaster; but, thanks be to God, I have succeeded in procuring a good man; for I could not have answered it before God and my conscience, to let the children of my people rove about in such a state of ignorance and neglect.

"The principles of modern infidelity are happily unknown amongst us. The people are attached to their Bibles, and to such ministers as preach the word of reconciliation. When I travel about in the colonies, the people are rejoiced to hear a sermon. In some weekdays I have preached three or four times. Truly, the harvest is great, and I delight in my work. Drunkenness is the chief vice which prevails among our colonists. Formerly, many of their own ministers set them a very bad example in this respect; but, at present, most of the clergymen are worthy, and evangelical characters.

"Oh! that I could feed the hungry multitude more plentifully! Brethren, I repeat my application, assist me in this good work!"

This letter was addressed by Mr. Huber to his religious friends in Germany and Switzerland, and sent over to this country by a respectable gentleman in Altona, with the following remark:

"Mr. J. S. Huber is personally known to us as a very excellent and amiable character. He deserves the attention of our christian friends in England. A donation of theirs might greatly assist him in carrying his benevolent views into execution. [*Apply to the Rev. Mr. Steinkopff, Savoy, London.*]

SPAIN.

Extract of a Letter to the Rev. J. Townsend, from a person on board his Majesty's ship Le Tonant, off Corunna, in Spain, dated September 3, 1808.

"It was in consequence of your speaking to me about the Spanish Testament and tracts (then printing) that my heart was first directed to this part of the Lord's work. I trust that those which I distributed at Monte Video, will be the means of diffusing much light in that place; and, from thence, to other parts of South America; and now my heart is much set upon this country. I

have written to Dr. H—— to send me some of the Gospels in Spanish; but, as I have not yet received an answer, I thought it necessary to write to you also, that there may be no delay.

"It will delight you to hear that there is a church of Christ in this ship, about twenty-two in number, who worship God on the deck thrice a-day; and, in the evening, we have an exhortation from H. P——, a sailmaker, who acts as an elder among them, and who is a very faithful man, not suffering any to sleep in their profession, but urging them continually to press after holiness in heart and life, in the use of all means, without ceasing; and the Lord has abundantly blessed his endeavours; for I never knew any persons more spiritual and heavenlyminded than they are."

"I hope to receive the Gospels and Tracts soon; and intreat your fervent and constant prayers that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."

We add the following account from the same ship, dated Torbay, December 29, 1807; and which was inserted in the Methodist Magazine for April last:

"Poor J. T—— is gone to the world of spirits, himself a happy one! He died above two years ago, on board the Ville de Paris, rejoicing as he expired. We had one of our people killed in the Trafalgar action. Another has died since then in Plymouth hospital. Some are gone into other ships; so that you see the little leaven spreads. Our number is now about twenty-four. Men of foreign nations have here found peace with God. A Portuguese, a Swede, a Dane, and a Dutchman, who, I believe, will bless the Lord for ever for coming into an English ship. There appears to be with us here a greater degree of God's Spirit poured out than is common. We have a good prospect of seeing our little church increase in numbers. I trust, we shall also grow in grace, and in the further knowledge of our Saviour Jesus Christ. H. R.

OBITUARY.

Some account of SAMUEL FAY, *of Little Bartholomew Close, London, who died June* 17, 1808, *aged* 10 *years and* 7 *months.*

IT pleased God to affect his mind very early with a sense of religion, and to dispose him to attend to secret prayer. He was early and frequently afflicted; but his afflictions were sanctified in

producing thoughtfulness, and inquiries about eternal things, which increased with his years. His advancement in knowledge was considerable; but he was solicitous fully to understand one branch of education before he proceeded to another. This disposition was remarkably useful to him in his spiritual concerns; for he would often inquire, with much earnestness, the meaning of different passages of scripture; and was not satisfied without understanding what he heard or read on those subjects.

He often suffered much pain, arising from the nature of his complaint; which was an enlargement of the heart, and which adhered to his side. His natural disposition was likewise lively, which often excited him to impatience and fretfulness; but he was frequently praying, and requesting others to pray for patience and entire submission to the will of God; and God was pleased remarkably to answer prayer, by enabling him to bear long confinement and pain, in a manner that often comforted his comforters, and encouraged many to trust in the mighty God of Jacob.

During the last seven months, he was almost wholly confined, and unable to attend public worship, which he longed to do; but he resigned himself freely into the hands of God. He became gradually less reserved, and conversed freely about the state of his soul. He said, he considered it a great mercy to have had religious parents, though he had sometimes thought them too strict; but now he saw it was all for his real good!

The Bible was the book which he most highly valued, having found it early blessed to him. Dr. Watts's Hymns; Pilgrim's Progress, with Mr. B.'s Notes; and the Youth's Magazine, were likewise very useful to him. He had early committed to memory the 146th of Dr. Watts's Hymns. B. 2; and inquired the meaning of the different verses. He repeated them one day to a friend, applying many of them to himself. For example, he remarked, "If Christ had not been a *Fountain*, how could I have been washed from my sins? If he had not been the *Way*, I could not have got to heaven! If he had not been the *Star* from on high, how could my benighted soul have been enlightened?" &c.

About three months before his decease, his disorder was pronounced to be incurable. When this was communicated to him, he received the information with composure, and said, "Then God will take me to heaven!" Observing his parents affected, he

said, "Don't grieve! you know I am but lent; and I must be paid some time or other!"

By the direction of the doctor, he was removed into the country. Upon which he observed, "I know that nothing is impossible with God; and I wish to try the means. If I live, I hope it will be to his glory, and the comfort of my parents! I wish to be what he thinks best! If he takes me away, I know it will be from a world full of trials and sins; and, I believe, he will take me to himself!"

Though he was generally comfortable in his mind, he had seasons of darkness; and sometimes compared himself to Feeble-mind, the pilgrim. A few weeks before his death, he was much harassed with temptations to profane the name of God, which made him very unhappy, and led him to earnest prayer for help; by which the temptation was removed, and his peace restored.

As his complaints (which ended in a dropsy) increased, he appeared to take his leave of the world; he desired that his books and things for amusement might be brought to him; when he distributed them among his young friends, who surrounded his bed, addressing them severally and affectionately; earnestly requesting them to attend to the concerns of eternity, that they might meet him in glory.

Putting his Bible into his brother's hand, he said, There, "I give you that Bible; it is an old one, but it is a precious one; it has been a great blessing to me; the comfort I now feel, I got from that book. I am going to heaven; and there it was I learnt the way; study it, and treasure up these things in your mind; remember, they are the words of a dying brother. May this book make *you* happy on your dying bed. I am going; try to supply my place; obey your father and mother, and do every thing to make them happy, as long as you live. Love ministers; they are God's servants; I love them dearly; I am on a dying bed, but I am as easy as on a bed of roses. I am a sinner, but Christ has washed me clean; and he is going to give me a crown, and a robe of righteousness. I am going to have more than the mines of Mexico, or the golden Indies."

Presenting a Bible to another young relation, he said, "There is a Bible for *you;* pray for a blessing on it; don't part with it, even if you want bread, for there is the bread of life; and it will support you when every thing else will fail; it has supported me in the midst of all my afflictions: it is a good chart, make it your guide,

and it will carry you clear of all the rocks and quicksands you may meet with, and will land you safely on the heavenly shore. Seek the Lord while you are young; you cannot enjoy life, unless you are fit to die; remember there is great encouragement for you; Christ says "Suffer little children to come unto me." You see God can give his grace to a child as well as to a man. Take care of bad company, they lead to ruin; choose the company of those who fear God; you see he takes the young as well as the old. I am younger than you; and your turn must come. Don't neglect religion: it will be a shocking thing, and will cut you to the heart, to reflect at the last that you might have been saved, but would not! you know you have relations in heaven; and I charge you to meet me there. On repeating the 57th Hymn, B. 2, he said, "Ah! none know the joy of pardoned sin but those who feel it: I do feel it.

"I am happy, so happy, I cannot express what I feel! I am quite ready now, God is going to take me to himself. Christ has paid my debt, all my debt: a great load. I was unable to pay any, but he died for me; yes, for my soul. Don't grieve; the Lord will support you; I am sure he will, though he will not recover me. The Lord is good and mighty: he will never leave nor forsake those who trust in him.

Precious Bible! what a treasure, &c.

"I have no doubts, no fears now; no, all are gone. I have sown in tears, but I shall reap in joy. I am ready: I am going to sing praises to God and the Lamb for ever and ever, for he is worthy."

Another time, speaking of Christ's ascending to heaven, he said, "and there I am going to be with him; there I shall lean on his bosom as the beloved John did; there I shall see as I am seen, and know, as I am known; there I shall worship as I ought, and praise as I ought: now I see through a glass darkly; but then (unspeakable mercy!) face to face."

A minister visiting him when in great pain, and much in want of sleep, he requested him to pray for sleep and ease; but his pain increasing after he left him, he prayed aloud himself. "O, Lord, give me patience! give me patience! O, for faith! O, for sleep! O, give me ease, or take me to thyself this night! Why are thy chariot wheels so long a coming? Come, friendly death, and release me!" His father saying, "I hope you will still be enabled to sub-

mit to the will of God;" he instantly replied, "O, yes; his will be done, his will be done! It is a blessed will, it is a blessed will! It is very painful: I don't understand it now; but I shall soon!" He was indulged with comfortable ease and sleep that night. The next morning he was very thankful, and said, "Well, we see God hears and answers prayer; and I am a proof of it." His mother saying, "We never see you cry now, though your friends are often weeping around you!" he said, "No; I have done with tears: Christ has done so much for me, I have nothing to do but rejoice and praise!" She asked him if he felt any dread at the thought of being confined in the grave, he immediately replied, "No; none at all!

"Corruption, earth, and worms
Shall but refine this flesh,
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh!"

Is not Christ risen, and become the first fruits of them that sleep in Jesus? I know I must die to be with him; and I am thankful I am made willing; for the sting of death is taken away! God will give me the victory; and I shall soon cast anchor in the haven of eternal rest. I will rejoice in this world, and go to praise him without end in a better; and you will soon come to me: a little time, and we shall meet where parting shall be no more!"

On the day of his departure, he was so exhausted as to be able to say but little. He was fully sensible his dissolution was fast approaching; but he was quite comfortable, and enjoyed those parts of the word of God which were read to him.

He remained perfectly composed till his immortal spirit departed to the regions of eternal day without a struggle or a groan. Thus died a truly affectionate child. His decease was improved by the rev. Mr. Webb, whose ministry, with the rev. Mr. Campbell's were much blessed to him.

POETRY.

GOOD NEWS TO THE WILDERNESS, AND THE TRIUMPHS OF GRACE IN THE DESERT.

PART THE FIRST.

From realms where the day her first dawning extends,
The Sun of the gospel in glory ascends:
Ye forests attend, while your children combine
In accents unusual, in transports divine.

Involv'd in uncertainty, darkness and death,
The clouds of destruction hung over our path,
Till yon rising splendour enlighten'd our way
And pointed our steps to the regions of day.

A council on high has been held to inquire
For help for mankind, and peace kindled the fire;
Provision was made for the nations distress'd,
And with the rich treasure, all lands shall be blest.

The chain of salvation, let down from above
Cemented by justice and brighten'd by love,
The good hope which flows through the channel of grace
Joins heaven and earth in its mighty embrace.

On high see our Jesus, the penitent's friend,
With banners of mercy compassionate bend,
Entreating the wretched, rebellious and vile
From ruin to flee and repose in his smile.

The Prince of Salvation is coming! prepare,
A way in the desert his blessings to share;
He comes to relieve us from sins and from woes
And bid the dark wilderness bloom like the rose.

His reign shall extend from the east to the west,
Compose all the tumults of nature to rest;
The dayspring of glory illumine the skies
And ages on ages of happiness rise.

The brutehearted temper of man shall grow tame;
The wolf and the lion lie down with the lamb;
The bear with the kine shall contentedly feed,
While children their young ones in harmony lead.

Then the serpent shall dart his black venom in vain;
The rattlesnake harmless shall bask on the plain;

The infant shall play on the hole of the asp,
And, smiling, the folds of the cockatrice grasp.
No more shall the sound of the warwhoop be heard;
The ambush and slaughter no longer be fear'd;
The tomahawk buried shall rust in the ground,
While peace and good will to the nations abound.
All spirit of war to the gospel shall now,
Like th' bow lie unstrung at the foot of the plough;
To prune the young orchard the spear shall be bent
And love greet the world with a smile of content.
Slight tinctures of skin shall no longer engage
The fervour of jealousy, murder and rage;
The *white* and the *red* shall in friendship be join'd,
Wide spreading benevolence over mankind.
Hail scene of felicity, transports and joy,
When sin and vexation shall scarcely annoy!
Rich blessings of grace from above shall be giv'n,
And life only serve as a passage to heaven.
Roll forward, dear Saviour, roll forward the day,
When all shall submit, and rejoice in thy sway!
When *white men and Indians*, united in praise.
One vast hallelujah triumphant shall raise.

PART THE SECOND.

O hark! what pleasing sounds salute our ears,
They joy inspire, and banish all our fears;
Lo! 'tis the Gospel Herald of free-grace
Proposing mercy to the Indian race.
Plung'd in the gulf of error, long we lay
Without one friend, to guide our cheerless way,
No ray of promise lighten'd on our road
To point our footsteps to the throne of GOD.
Lost in the maze of *superstition's* night,
Thick films of darkness hung upon our sight,
And *Nature's* laws; they wanted force to bind,
Nor comfort brought to an afflicted mind.
But HE, whose voice the universe obeys,
Whose powerful providence all nature sways,
Whose love, parental, none can circumscribe,
Has sent salvation to our little tribe.

PART THE THIRD.

THEN straighten the path, let the chain be made bright,
Since concord and peace all our wishes unite;
Cemented in love, shall the *white* man and *red*,
Triumphantly follow CHRIST JESUS their Head.

The Lord gave the message, and numbers increase
To publish the tidings of mercy and peace;
Repentance and pardon thro' Jesus proclaim,
And glory to all who believe on his name.

From the East, to the West, let his praises be sung,
And his love be recounted by every tongue;
Let the *young* and the *aged* his goodness relate,
Whose pity regarded our helpless estate.

O may we receive the great favour divine,
Ourselves and our all to the Saviour resign;
On him our vast hope of Salvation depends,
Then let us rejoice with the heralds HE sends.

THE DISTINCTION OF AGES.

THE seven first years of life, (man's break of day),
Gleams of short sense, a dawn of thought display;
When fourteen springs have bloom'd his downy cheek,
His soft and blushing meanings learn to speak;
From twenty-one proud manhood takes its date,
Yet is not strength complete till twenty-eight;
Thence, to his five-and-thirtieth, life's gay fire
Sparkles, burns loud, and flames in fierce desire;
At forty-two, his eyes grave wisdom wear,
And the dark future dims him o'er with care;
On to the nine-and-fortieth, toils increase,
And busy hopes and fears disturb his peace;
At fifty-six, cool reason reigns entire,
Then life burns steady, and with temp'rate fire;
But sixty-three unbinds the body's strength,
Ere th' unwearied mind has run her length;
And when, from seventy, age surveys her last,
Tir'd, she stops short—and wishes all were past.